

**AMENDMENTS TO CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A plate attachable to spinal vertebrae comprising:  
5 | a plurality of first and second apertures for passage of screws which attach to  
| respective spinal vertebrae, all of the apertures being defined along a single axis, and  
| one of the apertures being defined as a slot; and by the plate for the passage of screws  
| which attach to the spinal vertebrae; and  
| a cleat extending from an interior face of said plate.
2. (Currently Amended) The plate of claim 1 wherein said axis is a  
| longitudinal axis in which one of said first and second apertures is a slot.
3. (Original) The plate of claim 1 including a central portion having a reduced width.
4. (Currently Amended) The plate of claim 1 wherein said cleat is aligned  
| along a common transverse axis with the center of one of the apertures, ~~said first~~  
| ~~aperture.~~
5. (Currently Amended) The plate of claim 1 including a second cleat  
| wherein said second cleat is aligned along a common transverse axis with the center of  
| one of the apertures, ~~said second aperture.~~
6. (Original) The plate of claim 1 wherein the plate is bowed along its width.
7. (Currently Amended) A plate system for holding two vertebrae apart comprising:  
| first and second screws for attaching to said respective ones of the vertebrae;

- 5        a plate having interior and exterior faces;  
      5        said plate defining at least two apertures; along a single axis, the apertures being  
      |        spaced to be associated with respective ones of the vertebrae and sized for passage of  
      |        the screws, and one of the apertures being a slot; and  
      |        said interior face being provided with a cleat.

8.        (Original) The system of claim 7 wherein said screws are of a  
cancellous type.

9.        (Original) The system of claim 7 wherein said plate has a length not  
exceeding 43 millimeters and a width not exceeding 12 millimeters.

10.       (Original) The system of claim 7 wherein said cleat is in the form of a  
conical spike.

11.       (Original) The system of claim 7 wherein said plate further includes a  
leading edge and a trailing edge and a beam integrally formed within said plate, said  
beam extending from said leading edge to trailing edge in an unbroken line generally  
along a centerline of said plate.

12 - 18.       (Cancelled)

19.       (New ) The plate of claim 1 wherein said axis is offset from a central  
axis of the plate.

20.       (New ) The plate of claim 7 wherein said single axis is offset from a  
central axis of the plate.

21.       (New) A plate attachable to spinal vertebrae comprising:  
a plurality of apertures for passage of screws which attach to respective and  
adjacent spinal vertebrae, all of the apertures being defined along a single axis, and one  
of the apertures being defined as a slot; and

- 5        a cleat extending from an interior face of said plate.

22. (New) The plate of claim 21 wherein said axis is a longitudinal axis.
23. (New) The plate of claim 21 including a central portion having a reduced width.
24. (New) The plate of claim 21 wherein said cleat is aligned along a common transverse axis with the center of one of the apertures.
25. (New) The plate of claim 21 including a second cleat wherein said second cleat is aligned along a common transverse axis with the center of one of the apertures.
26. (New ) The plate of claim 21 wherein adjacent ones of the passages are aligned with the adjacent spinal vertebrae.